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Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)

Reporting period from 28 February to 26 June 2014

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) since my most recent report of 26 February 2014 (S/2014/130).

2. The area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remained generally calm and stable. The cessation of hostilities was interrupted on 14 March, when the Israel Defense Forces conducted heavy artillery shelling into Lebanon and directed tank fire at two houses in Kafr Killa in response to a roadside explosion that hit its patrol in the area of Shab'a Farms south of the Blue Line. Three Israel Defense Forces soldiers sustained light injuries from the explosion and, in Lebanon, two houses were significantly damaged from tank fire. UNIFIL immediately liaised with both sides to contain the incident and quickly restore the calm. Overall, the parties displayed resolve to maintain calm along the Blue Line and affirmed their commitment to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), despite the lack of progress on their outstanding obligations under the resolution and the absence of movement towards a permanent ceasefire.

3. The security situation in Lebanon saw notable improvement following the adoption by the new government of security plans for Tripoli and the Bekaa. Since early April, the Lebanese Armed Forces, in close coordination with other Lebanese security agencies, began implementing the plans in Tripoli, where 32 people had been killed in the latest round of violence, and in the eastern Bekaa region. Though the Lebanese Armed Forces sustained casualties, it continued to deploy robustly. That has led to the successful interdiction of people and materiel associated with terrorist activities and to curbing violence in Lebanon. Three terrorist attacks did, however, occur: on 16 March, a suicide car bomb in Nabi Othman killed four people; on 29 March, a similar attack in Arsal killed three people; and on 20 June, another such attack in Dahr el-Baidar killed one person.

4. Cross-border shelling and shooting from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon continued, causing at least two fatalities, nine injuries and material damage. There were also at least 23 airstrikes by Syrian Government aircraft on Lebanese territory, in which four people were killed and three were injured. The

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Lebanese Armed Forces reported continued smuggling of weapons across the Lebanese-Syrian border.

5. Ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic led to a further influx of Syrian nationals seeking shelter in Lebanon. As at 11 June, there were 1,093,603 registered Syrian refugees assisted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and partners, including 49,559 in the UNIFIL area of operations, an increase of approximately 197,906 since my most recent report. With over 1 million refugees, Lebanon has the highest per capita concentration of refugees in the world.

6. The inclusive government of "national interest" led by Prime Minister Tammam Salam agreed its policy statement on 14 March and won a vote of confidence in Parliament on 20 March. The two-month presidential election period started on 25 March. After one parliamentary session in which no candidate won sufficient votes to secure election and three scheduled sessions that failed to achieve a quorum, the constitutional period for the election ended without a new president of the Republic being elected. Upon the expiration of the term of President Michel Sleiman, the powers of the presidency transferred to the Council of Ministers under the leadership of Prime Minister Salam, in accordance with the Constitution.

7. On 5 March the International Support Group for Lebanon met in Paris at an event hosted by French President François Hollande and attended by President Sleiman and foreign ministers. The Group has continued to advocate greater international support to key areas affected by the Syrian conflict in Lebanon, and to underline international unity in support of stability and the continuity of State institutions in Lebanon during the formation of the government and presidential election processes. In the context of the agenda of the Group, the Government of Italy held a ministerial conference in Rome in support of the Lebanese Armed Forces on 17 June.

II. Implementation of resolution 1701 (2006)

A. Situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

8. During the evening of 14 March, an Israel Defense Forces patrol vehicle was hit by a roadside explosive device in the Shab'a Farms area (Sector East), approximately 1 kilometre (km) south of the Blue Line. Shortly thereafter, the Israel Defense Forces fired at least 10 rounds of 155-millimetre artillery into Lebanon's Bastara (Sector East) area at a distance of up to 2 km north of the Blue Line and two rounds of 120-millimetre direct tank fire into two houses in Kafr Killa (Sector East), located 12 km away from the explosion. Immediately after the first incident, UNIFIL engaged both parties, including through the liaison and coordination channels, urging their restraint, defusing tensions and facilitating the restoration of the cessation of hostilities.

9. In a letter to UNIFIL on 18 March, the Israel Defense Forces protested the incident that it described as "directionally focused fragmentary chargers set off against the Israel Defense Forces by Hizbullah". In a media interview on 7 April, Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah claimed responsibility for the attack against the

Israel Defense Forces. On 9 April, the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations wrote to me (S/2014/254) to protest the attack as a severe violation of resolution 1701 (2006), and referred to the responsibility of the Government of Lebanon in this regard. On 14 April, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations also wrote to me (A/68/848-S/2014/278) to condemn the Israeli fire as a "flagrant act of aggression" by Israel in violation of resolution 1701 (2006).

10. UNIFIL completed its investigation into the incident and shared its findings with the parties. Notwithstanding the claim of responsibility for the explosive attack by Hizbullah, the UNIFIL investigation has not found any material evidence to establish the identity of the perpetrators or that they operated across the Blue Line. Furthermore, UNIFIL has not confirmed any connection between the houses targeted by the Israel Defense Forces in a residential area of Kafr Killa and the roadside explosion.

11. The Israel Defense Forces continued its occupation of the northern part of the village of Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line in violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and of Lebanese sovereignty. Israel has not responded to the UNIFIL proposal regarding security arrangements aimed at facilitating the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from the area, which was submitted to both parties on 25 June 2011, and approved by the Lebanese Armed Forces. UNIFIL continued to raise the issue with the Israeli authorities, who did not provide any new information. On 13 occasions, UNIFIL observed Israel Defense Forces personnel carrying out operational activities in the occupied area of northern Ghajar.

12. Violations of Lebanese airspace, mostly by unmanned aerial vehicles and fixed-wing aircraft, continued almost daily in violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and of Lebanese sovereignty. UNIFIL protested all violations to the Israel Defense Forces, calling upon the authorities to cease them immediately. The Government of Lebanon also protested against the violations, while the Government of Israel continued to claim that the overflights were necessary security measures.

13. Tension rose along the Blue Line on 11 May, after an Israel Defense Forces excavator, while undertaking maintenance works along the technical fence, extended its boom above the technical fence to clear vegetation close to the Blue Line in the vicinity of Naqoura. Public statements by Lebanese officials, supplemented by reports in the Lebanese media, decried the Israel Defense Forces activities as violations of resolution 1701 (2006). UNIFIL immediately engaged both parties, calling on the Israel Defense Forces to provide sufficient notice before conducting maintenance works close to the Blue Line, and requesting the Lebanese Armed Forces to exercise restraint. The Israel Defense Forces interrupted its work in the area, and the parties have since agreed that UNIFIL would complete the works in that sensitive stretch. The Israel Defense Forces agreed to provide UNIFIL more advanced notice to ensure adequate coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, and is proceeding with maintenance works in other sections of its technical fence along the Blue Line. On 18 May, the Lebanese Armed Forces in a statement to the media claimed that "the arm of an Israeli bulldozer violated the Lebanese territories in the area of Labouneh for a distance of 1 metre in the air." On 19 May, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations protested the works carried out by the Israel Defense Forces on 11 May and further alleged that on 12 May debris was shoveled north of the Blue Line into Lebanese territory by Israel.

UNIFIL has found no evidence of any Blue Line violation in this context and continues to monitor the situation in close coordination with the parties.

14. During the reporting period, UNIFIL confirmed that the Israel Defense Forces violated the Blue Line on three occasions, and the Lebanese Armed Forces on one occasion. On 17 March, UNIFIL observed three Israeli soldiers briefly crossing the Blue Line in area 14B along Ghajar. UNIFIL protested the violation to the Israel Defense Forces, who denied the violation. On 26 March, the Lebanese Armed Forces informed UNIFIL that it had observed several Israeli soldiers crossing the Blue Line in the vicinity of B30 (Sector East). The Israel Defense Forces, in a letter dated 19 May, confirmed the violation, stating that it was "inadvertent and unintentional".

15. On 17 April, UNIFIL observed four Israeli soldiers crossing the Blue Line in the vicinity of Bastara, where the Blue Line is not visibly marked, towards shepherds before returning south of the Blue Line. The soldiers did not heed calls and gestures from UNIFIL personnel who were standing at a distance. UNIFIL protested the violation to the Israel Defense Forces, who denied the violation. Later that day, in the same area, the Israel Defense Forces apprehended two Lebanese shepherds, aged 15 and 17, south of the Blue Line. UNIFIL contacted the Israel Defense Forces and facilitated the release of the shepherds the same evening. On 8 May, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations protested the apprehension.

16. On 13 May, two members of the Lebanese Armed Forces did not heed the calls of UNIFIL to step back and briefly crossed approximately 7 metres south of the Blue Line, while taking pictures in the area of Naqoura.

17. UNIFIL observed brief crossings of the Blue Line, mainly by Lebanese shepherds and farmers. Most violations occurred in the Shab`a Farms area, Blida (Sector West) and Rumaysh (Sector West). UNIFIL soldiers at the locations warned the civilians involved not to cross the Blue Line. UNIFIL protested against the violations to the Lebanese Armed Forces, recalling that it is the primary responsibility of the Lebanese authorities to ensure full respect for the Blue Line in its entirety.

18. UNIFIL completed its investigation into the 29 December rocket launching incident and shared its findings with the parties. As part of its recommendations, UNIFIL urged the Lebanese authorities to pursue their investigations into the incident, with a view to identifying and apprehending the perpetrators, and bringing them to justice. UNIFIL also asked the Lebanese Armed Forces, assisted by UNIFIL, to intensify efforts to ensure that there are no armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL between the Blue Line and the Litani River. UNIFIL recommended that the Israel Defense Forces should refrain from retaliation in such instances except where clearly required in immediate self-defence.

19. On a few occasions, UNIFIL observed civilians carrying unauthorized weapons in the area of operations, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006). In all cases, UNIFIL attempted to make contact with the persons involved and informed the Lebanese Armed Forces. On 3 May, a UNIFIL patrol observed a suspicious car with a passenger holding a pistol in the vicinity of Sribbin (Sector West). On 12 May, UNIFIL saw a civilian with a weapon under his belt, riding a scooter in the

vicinity of Bint Jubayl (Sector West). On 18 May, a passenger in a vehicle raised a pistol towards the UNIFIL guard at United Nations position 5-10 in the vicinity of Al Hinniyah. The guard also raised his gun to deliver a warning before the car drove away.

20. During the traditional hunting season, UNIFIL noted an increase in the number of individuals carrying hunting weapons in the area of operations, with more than 100 instances reported. The majority of the cases were observed in the areas of Meiss ej-Jebel (Sector East) and Blida. In every instance, UNIFIL patrols moved to stop the hunting activity. The Lebanese Armed Forces has primary responsibility for ensuring that the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River is free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL.

21. With the exception of the incidents cited above, UNIFIL did not receive specific information or credible evidence regarding the illegal presence or the unauthorized transfer of armed personnel or weapons in its area of operations, nor did UNIFIL activities lead to the discovery of any arms caches or unauthorized military infrastructure. Open source reports of security incidents indicate that armed persons and weapons remain present inside Palestinian refugee camps. In accordance with its mandate, UNIFIL does not proactively search for weapons in the south. As described in my previous reports, UNIFIL cannot enter private property unless there is credible evidence of a violation of resolution 1701 (2006), including an imminent threat of hostile activity emanating from the specific location. Where specific information is received regarding the illegal presence of armed personnel or weapons inside its area of operations, UNIFIL, in cooperation with the Lebanese Armed Forces, remains determined to act with all means available within its mandate and to the full extent provided for in its rules of engagement.

22. UNIFIL conducted an investigation into a bush fire that had occurred in the vicinity of B19 (Sector East) on 24 December 2013, destroying a cultivated area of approximately 46,000 square metres. In a protest letter on 26 December 2013, the Lebanese Armed Forces had imputed responsibility for the origin of the fire to operational activity performed by the Israel Defense Forces. The UNIFIL investigation did not substantiate the involvement of a person or group in the setting of the fire, and therefore did not determine any violation of resolution 1701 (2006).

23. An investigation also was launched into the impact of an unidentified object, alleged to be a bullet, on a car driven by a civilian, recognized later as a UNIFIL national staff member, on 2 March near Ramyeh (Sector West). The impact shattered the rear windshield of the car. None of the three occupants was injured. At the time of the incident, the car was at a position generally in line with the orientation of an Israel Defense Forces firing range located in the vicinity, south of the Blue Line. Based on the available evidence, UNIFIL was unable to determine conclusively whether a violation of resolution 1701 (2006) had taken place. UNIFIL recommended that the Israel Defense Forces undertake a review of all shooting range facilities close to the Blue Line in order to mitigate risks and avoid potential residual hazards on Lebanese territory.

24. The strength of the Lebanese Armed Forces in the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River remained at the level of approximately two brigades. UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces continued to carry out their daily coordinated activities between the Blue Line and the Litani River. UNIFIL conducted on average

10,000 activities monthly, out of which approximately 10 per cent was carried out in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces.

25. There were, since my last report, 17 instances during which UNIFIL patrols encountered unfriendly or hostile behaviour from local civilians. In 11 of those cases, stones were thrown, at times causing minor material damage to UNIFIL vehicles. On 11 March, three vehicles blocked a UNIFIL patrol in Shaqra (Sector East), after which approximately 10 civilians tried to open the hood of one of the UNIFIL vehicles. On 13 April, in the vicinity of Yarin (Sector West), civilians blocked the road in front of a UNIFIL patrol, and damaged one of the patrol vehicles with sticks and stones. On 24 April, a UNIFIL patrol vehicle in a narrow road in Blida (Sector East) was surrounded by a crowd of civilians who started throwing stones at UNIFIL and Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers, resulting in slight injuries to four peacekeepers and slight damage to the vehicles. On the same day, in the vicinity of Yarin (Sector West), a UNIFIL patrol discovered that a UNIFIL, not permanently manned, position had been vandalized during the night.

26. In four instances equipment was stolen. On 20 March, a UNIFIL patrol vehicle was stopped by two civilians in El Adeisse (Sector East). Once UNIFIL personnel opened the window, one of the civilians took a camera and drove away. The equipment has not been recovered. On 26 March, in the vicinity of Rumyah (Sector West), a UNIFIL patrol was approached by two civilians, one of whom snatched a pair of binoculars from a UNIFIL soldier before fleeing. On 17 April, in the area of Bastara (Sector East), in the presence of Lebanese Armed Forces, a civilian snatched a camera from a UNIFIL soldier. The camera was retrieved, but the memory card was not.

27. On 6 March, a convoy of four UNIFIL patrol vehicles in the vicinity of Mafraq el-Jibbayn (Sector West) was blocked by a civilian vehicle. As the convoy attempted to leave the location, one of the vehicles was blocked by a group of civilians until the Lebanese Armed Forces escorted it out of the area. On 20 March, an Observer Group Lebanon patrol was stopped by a roadblock in Al Khiam (Sector East) by a municipal policeman and a group of civilians, denying access to the market area. In all the above cases, UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces whose intervention in most instances led to the resolution of the incident.

28. UNIFIL relations with the local population remained largely positive. UNIFIL undertook regular outreach and liaison activities with the communities present in the area of operations, including in coordination with United Nations funds, agencies and programmes, and international and Lebanese non-governmental organizations. Quick impact projects were implemented by troop-contributing countries and through the UNIFIL budget, including the provision of water and power supply equipment, and capacity-building activities. Medical, dental and veterinary assistance was provided to the local population. Medical services also were provided to Syrian refugees in the area of operations.

29. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force continued to carry out its dual mandate of maritime interdiction operations in the area of maritime operations and training of Lebanese Navy personnel. As at 15 May, the Maritime Task Force hailed 1,334 ships and the Lebanese Navy and Customs officials inspected 263 vessels to verify that there were no unauthorized arms or related materiel on board. The Maritime Task Force conducted 85 training activities with the Lebanese Navy at sea and onshore.

B. Security and liaison arrangements

30. UNIFIL liaison and coordination arrangements with both parties continued to serve as the foundation of UNIFIL work in implementing resolution 1701 (2006), safeguarding the cessation of hostilities, ensuring full respect of the Blue Line, and protecting security and stability in southern Lebanon. The parties continued to engage constructively with UNIFIL, with daily effective liaison activities at the tactical, operational and strategic levels, and in regular meetings of the tripartite forum. There was no progress, however, in establishing a UNIFIL office in Tel Aviv.

31. Since my most recent report (S/2014/130), there were two tripartite meetings on 24 March and 7 May, where most of the incidents and issues described above were addressed. The parties continued to concur on the importance of the tripartite mechanism to maintain communication channels, prevent tensions and escalation when incidents occur, especially in the light of the situation in the region, and demonstrated their readiness to work with UNIFIL to this end. The importance of moving towards agreed solutions for practical localized understandings in sensitive areas along the Blue Line also was discussed and options explored in this regard.

32. Following discussions at the 24 March meeting in the context of the 14 March incident, UNIFIL increased its presence along the Blue Line in the Shab'a Farms area to deter possible illicit activities.

33. In line with previous agreement reached at the tripartite forum, UNIFIL, in close coordination with the parties, undertook seasonal clearance work on the Wazzani riverbed along the Blue Line to de-escalate tensions in this sensitive area.

34. UNIFIL continued to work with the parties to erect visible markers along the Blue Line. As at 3 June, UNIFIL had cleared 307 points from mines, measured 235 points, constructed 216 points and verified 194 points.

35. As part of UNIFIL efforts to support the implementation of the strategic dialogue plan, the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander invited all UNIFIL contingent commanders and their countries to promote the strategic dialogue process and consider ways in which they might be in a position to provide vital support to the Lebanese Armed Forces within the UNIFIL area of operations both on land and at sea. The strategic dialogue plan is an integral part of the Lebanese Armed Forces' five-year capabilities development plan, which is supported by the International Support Group for Lebanon. The strategic dialogue permanent committee met on 25 April to review the process and decided to nominate a maritime subcommittee and activate the training sub-committee.

C. Disarming armed groups

36. Hizbullah continued to acknowledge publicly that it maintains a substantial military capacity separate from that of the Lebanese State, which it claims serves as a deterrent against potential aggression from Israel. The Government of Israel asserts that these weapons, including large quantities of missiles, constitute a serious threat. President Sleiman continued to advocate the approach to the control of Hizbullah's arms contained in the National Defence Strategy proposal that he presented under the National Dialogue in September 2012. On 31 March and 5 May, President Sleiman chaired National Dialogue sessions attended by Prime Minister

Salam, Speaker Berri and other leaders, though not by Hizbullah or the Lebanese Forces. Participants reaffirmed the need to consider how best to take forward the national defence strategy proposal and to abide by Lebanon's policy of disassociation pursuant to the Baabda Declaration of 2012.

37. Arms outside the control of the State continued to threaten stability in Lebanon. Despite a drop in the frequency and size of attacks on civilians, twin suicide bombs on 19 February killed six people in south Beirut; and a suicide bomb at an army checkpoint in Hermel killed two soldiers and one civilian. On 16 March, a suicide car bomb attack in Nabi Othman, eastern Bekaa, killed four civilians; and on 29 March another suicide attack at an army checkpoint outside Arsal killed three soldiers. Abdullah Azzam Brigades claimed responsibility for the Beirut and Hermel attacks, while the Free Sunnis of Baalbek Brigade claimed responsibility for the latter two attacks. On 8 April, two soldiers were killed in an attack on a patrol in Akkar. On 20 June, a suicide car bomb attack at a security checkpoint in Dahr el-Baidar killed a member of the Internal Security Forces.

38. A greater degree of stability appears to have been established in Tripoli. Another round of violence between the Sunni neighbourhood of Bab al-Tabbaneh and the neighbouring Alawite area of Jebel Mohsen from 13 to 23 March had resulted in 32 dead, with reports of heavy weaponry being used. On 1 April, upon the recommendation of the High Defence Council, the Lebanese Armed Forces began implementation of a new security plan for Tripoli involving increased deployment, including in previously inaccessible areas; the dismantling of barriers; and the indictment of at least 120 individuals suspected of involvement in the violence. More than 170 wanted individuals have been arrested and at least 20 have turned themselves in since the plan was implemented. There have been violent incidents on at least three occasions during raids by the Lebanese Armed Forces to apprehend wanted individuals, but overall the security situation in Tripoli has improved significantly.

39. Also since 1 April, the Lebanese Armed Forces and security agencies began implementation of a security plan for the Bekaa, with focus on combating the widespread criminal, drug and arms smuggling networks. It involved the issuance of dozens of arrest warrants against persons suspected of belonging to terrorist groups or for carrying out terrorist attacks. The Lebanese Armed Forces deployed additional troops to the Arsal area, undertook robust activities to interdict individuals and materiel associated with suspected terrorist activities, and arrested a significant number of fugitives. The army also arrested Syrian individuals in the Bekaa border area for illegally entering Lebanon. Several unofficial checkpoints of Hizbullah in the Bekaa were removed. The Tripoli and Bekaa security plans were implemented in close cooperation and coordination among the Lebanese security agencies, with strong political support from the Government.

40. There has been no progress in the dismantling of military bases maintained by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) and Fatah al-Intifada. In 2006, it was decided in the National Dialogue that these bases should be dismantled. Their existence continues to compromise Lebanese sovereignty and impede the ability of the State to monitor and control effectively parts of the Lebanese-Syrian border.

41. On 28 March, leaders of Palestinian factions in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon signed a memorandum of understanding to insulate the camps in

Lebanon from regional and local tensions, including through cooperation together and with Lebanese security agencies. Despite this positive step, several camps witnessed increased intra-Palestinian violence during the reporting period. On 1 April, shooting in the Beddawi camp injured one Palestinian individual; on 7 April, clashes in the Mieh Mieh camp resulted in eight people killed; and on 9 and 21 April, two individuals were separately killed by masked gunmen in the Ein el-Hilweh camp. On 11 and 14 May, clashes erupted again in the Ein el-Hilweh camp, resulting in the death of at least one person. On 19 May, there was an assassination attempt against a commander in the Fatah Movement.

D. Arms embargo and border control

42. Representatives of the Government of Israel have consistently alleged that there are significant, ongoing arms transfers to Hizbullah across the Lebanese-Syrian border. The United Nations takes these allegations seriously, but it is not in a position to independently verify them. Representatives of the Government of Israel have continued to express grave concern at the prospect of the transfer of advanced weapons systems to Hizbullah.

43. On 27 February, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon informed me that on 24 February Israeli military aircraft had violated Lebanese airspace, raiding the outskirts of Janta town and firing several missiles within Lebanese territory, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006). There has been no claim of responsibility for the strike and the United Nations has no specific information of its own in this regard. Hizbullah subsequently acknowledged that a strike had occurred inside Lebanon and stated it would respond in due course. In an interview on 7 April, Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah stated that the incident of 14 March referred to in paragraph 9 of the present report was carried out by Hizbullah in retaliation for the Janta incident.

44. During the reporting period, there were repeated incidents of shooting, cross-border shelling and rockets fired into Lebanon from the Syrian Arab Republic, causing a number of injuries and material damage. There were frequent airstrikes by Syrian aircraft on Lebanese territory around Arsal, including a series of strikes in early March that killed at least four people. Also in March, 27 shelling incidents occurred along the northern and eastern borders of Lebanon, killing two people. While the rate of airstrikes and shelling from the Syrian Arab Republic has since slowed, there were at least 41 cross-border shelling incidents, demonstrating the continued risk to Lebanese civilians in border areas.

45. The Lebanese Armed Forces deployed in border areas to counter the movement of armed elements between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, and have had success interdicting smuggling activities and arresting suspects wanted on terrorist charges. On several occasions, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrested Syrian nationals in possession of arms, ammunition and other military equipment while entering Lebanon. The Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces also seized a number of stolen cars in the Bekaa reportedly involved in terrorist-related activities. On 27 March, the Lebanese Armed Forces killed Sami al-Atrash, a suspect in connection with several car bombings, including that of 9 July 2013 in Beirut's southern suburb. On 3 April, the army arrested Sheikh Musheer Khodr for suspected links to terrorist activities. On 12 April, the army arrested Ali Khodr

Jaafar for suspected attacks against the security agencies in Lebanon, and Ahmed al-Atrash, who stands accused of setting up booby-trapped cars. On 25 May, Lebanese security forces arrested Sheikh Omar Bakri Fustoq, who was charged with terrorism and instigating sectarian strife. On 15 May, five judges were appointed to investigate 12 terrorism incidents that took place in Beirut, Tripoli and Hermel between July 2013 and February 2014.

46. Armed elements reportedly remain present around Arsal between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, and there have been further security incidents in the town. On 29 March, a woman and a child were killed when Lebanese soldiers opened fire on their car after it failed to stop at a checkpoint in Arsal. On 30 April, five Lebanese soldiers were injured by Syrian gunmen on the outskirts of Arsal. On 16 May, three police officers were injured during a raid in Arsal. Several other shooting incidents at border checkpoints also occurred.

47. Hizbullah again publicly acknowledged their continued involvement in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic and held funerals for Hizbullah fighters killed there. Other Lebanese elements are also reported to be engaged in fighting alongside the Syrian opposition. President Sleiman continued to call for all parties to adhere to the policy of disassociation agreed in the Baabda Declaration of June 2012, including in the most recent meetings of the National Dialogue on 31 March and 5 May. In its ministerial statement of 15 March, the government of Prime Minister Salam adopted the policy of disassociation from regional crises.

48. On 22 April, after fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic caused an influx of approximately 4,500 Syrian refugees into the Lebanese enclave of Tfail, which is almost completely surrounded by Syrian territory, the Lebanese authorities organized a relief convoy to deliver humanitarian assistance to almost 6,000 civilians. Access to the area is extremely difficult. A further such delivery has taken place since and was facilitated locally, including with Hizbullah.

49. On 3 May, the Lebanese authorities implemented further restrictions to the entry of Palestine refugees coming from the Syrian Arab Republic. The Minister of the Interior informed the United Nations at the time that this action was temporary. The United Nations continues to express concern about such restrictions, as well as the decision by Lebanon's security agencies to stop renewing residency permits for Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic already in Lebanon.

50. The Government established a committee chaired by the Prime Minister and including the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Ministers of the Interior and of Social Affairs to address refugee-related issues, including the possible establishment of camps and limitations on access to Lebanon. On 31 May, the Minister of the Interior announced that Syrian refugees who returned to the Syrian Arab Republic after 1 June would lose their refugee status in Lebanon. UNHCR informed registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon of the decision, while expressing appreciation for the concern of the Government that refugee status be reserved for those in need of international protection. UNHCR reaffirmed to the Government that, in accordance with international law, a return to the Syrian Arab Republic would not in itself mean a person no longer had a fear of persecution or a serious risk to his or her life.

51. Some 80 per cent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon are women and children. Problems arise in securing birth registration for Syrian refugee children born in

Lebanon. A weak legal framework, limited resources and social barriers prevent refugees at risk from receiving adequate protection. As elsewhere, refugee women and children in Lebanon are disproportionately affected by sexual and gender-based violence, including early marriage, child labour and survival sex.

52. Owing to the dispersal of refugees across some 1,700 locations, community outreach by Government, United Nations and other agencies requires significant allocation of resources and time. In all areas of assistance to refugees and protection, outreach and support for host communities, the limited availability of resources is now an acute issue. Lebanon's share of the Regional Response Plan for 2014 remains only 22 per cent funded. With the approval on 8 April of a governance structure involving the World Bank, the United Nations and the Government, the multi-donor trust fund established to help Lebanon address the impact of the Syrian conflict is now operational.

E. Landmines and cluster bombs

53. Seven manual mine clearance teams, one explosive ordnance disposal team and one mechanical mine clearance team from UNIFIL, validated by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) team, were deployed in the UNIFIL area of operations from 28 February to 21 May. UNIFIL cleared more than 1,307 square metres of hazardous areas to provide access to Blue Line points, found and destroyed 116 anti-personnel landmines and reached seven Blue Line points. The UNMAS team conducted validation events, quality assurance visits of operational and explosive ordnance awareness training.

54. The Lebanese Mine Action Centre reported that, from 1 February to 30 April, it had cleared 627,607 square metres of hazardous areas, including minefields and battle areas, and destroyed 493 cluster munition items, 71 unexploded ordnance and 21 anti-personnel landmines. On 7 May, an accidental detonation of a cluster munition in the UNIFIL area of operations resulted in one Lebanese civilian fatality.

F. Delineation of borders

55. No progress was made in delineating or demarcating the Lebanese-Syrian border, including in areas where it is uncertain or disputed, as called for in Security Council resolutions 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006).

56. There has still been no reaction from either Israel or the Syrian Arab Republic to the provisional definition of the Shab'a Farms area contained in my report of 30 October 2007 on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2007/641).

III. Security and safety of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

57. UNIFIL continued to monitor proceedings at the Lebanese Military Court against individuals suspected of planning or perpetrating serious attacks against UNIFIL peacekeepers. The case of the 2007 attack remains open, pending new evidence. With regard to the two serious attacks perpetrated in 2008, a new hearing was scheduled on 11 November before the Military Court of Appeal in one case,

while in the other pending case, a verdict was issued at the Permanent Court of first instance on 2 May sentencing one of the perpetrators to forced labour and three years of imprisonment. In relation to two cases of serious attacks in 2011, the investigation is ongoing in one case, and in the other case further investigation is subject to the emergence of new evidence. In a case of terror intent opened in January 2014, suspects were detained and are under investigation.

IV. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

58. As at 8 June, the total military strength of UNIFIL was 10,112, including 407 women, from 37 troop-contributing countries. The civilian component consisted of 282 international and 680 national staff, including 81 and 155 women, respectively. A total of 52 United National Truce Supervision Organization military observers, including two women, are also part of UNIFIL.

59. There are 57 operational positions in the area of operations. One vacated United Nations position (UNP 2-2 in Sector West) was handed over to the Lebanese Armed Forces. On 7 April, UNIFIL temporarily deployed one Cambodian mine clearance team to assist the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus in Cyprus. As at 8 June, the Maritime Task Force consisted of two frigates, including one carrying a helicopter, a corvette with a helicopter and five fast patrol boats.

V. Observations

60. I welcome the overall calm that has continued to prevail along the Blue Line and in southern Lebanon, notwithstanding the protracted conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. Sustaining this calm and building upon it is essential for Lebanon's stability and for regional security. I commend the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces for their commitment to safeguarding the cessation of hostilities in spite of the serious incident that occurred on 14 March, and for their cooperation with UNIFIL, in particular their utilization of the liaison and coordination arrangements. I am encouraged by the parties' willingness to engage with UNIFIL on establishing practical localized solutions.

61. Nonetheless, the incident of 14 March in the UNIFIL area of operations underlines that the calm cannot be taken for granted. I condemn the attack against an Israel Defense Forces patrol south of the Blue Line, later claimed by Hizbullah, and the Israel Defense Forces' subsequent fire into Lebanon, both of which constitute serious breaches of the cessation of hostilities and of resolution 1701 (2006). These incidents could easily have led to further escalation. I recall the obligations of the parties to respect the integrity of the Blue Line and protect the cessation of hostilities. Once again, I call on the parties to respect the cessation of hostilities, and reiterate the expectations of the United Nations that a party that has been attacked should immediately notify UNIFIL, and should not respond unless in immediate self-defence. I welcome the quick restoration of the cessation of hostilities thanks to the parties' utilization of the UNIFIL liaison and coordination arrangements. I urge the parties to continue to work towards fulfilling their respective obligations under resolution 1701 (2006), and to make full use of the de-confliction tools UNIFIL places at their disposal.

62. Major obligations under the resolution remain outstanding and require action by both parties. The imperative to remove unauthorized weapons from the UNIFIL area of operations remains a long-term endeavour. I remain concerned at the lack of progress towards achieving a permanent ceasefire, as envisaged in resolution 1701 (2006). My Special Coordinator and UNIFIL have continued to emphasize with the parties their obligation under the resolution to work towards this goal by taking tangible steps and laying the groundwork for future progress. Given the regional challenges, both Israel and Lebanon would benefit from consolidation of the calm across the Blue Line. I encourage them to consider ways to make progress on the objectives of a permanent ceasefire and long-term solution.

63. I remain concerned that the violations of Lebanese airspace by Israel continue unabated, in violation of Lebanese sovereignty and of resolution 1701 (2006). I call again upon the Government of Israel to cease all overflights of Lebanese territory and territorial waters. The occupation by the Israel Defense Forces of the northern part of the village of Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line constitutes a continuing violation of resolution 1701 (2006). I recall again Israel's obligation to withdraw its armed forces from northern Ghajar, in accordance with the resolution.

64. Visible marking of the Blue Line continues to be an essential confidence-building measure, which contributes to preventing inadvertent ground violations. I encourage the parties to address the contentious points in a constructive and pragmatic manner, and to actively seek localized practical solutions in problematic areas. Both sides, notwithstanding their respective reservations, have undertaken to respect the Blue Line, as identified by the United Nations, in its entirety. I am concerned in particular about violations of the Blue Line carried out by armed forces personnel. Full respect for the integrity of the Blue Line is a critical factor in maintaining stability and calm in the area. Any deliberate violation of the Blue Line is unacceptable.

65. I remain concerned at incidents impeding freedom of movement of UNIFIL and instances of aggressive behaviour towards UNIFIL personnel. While their number remains marginal in comparison to the overall level of UNIFIL activities, some of these incidents have the potential to compromise UNIFIL effectiveness in executing its tasks under resolution 1701 (2006). It is the primary responsibility of the Lebanese authorities to ensure that UNIFIL can operate unhindered in its area of operations.

66. The maintenance of arms by Hizbullah and other groups outside the control of the State continues to restrict the ability of the State to exercise full authority over its territory and poses a threat to Lebanese sovereignty and stability, in contradiction with the country's obligations under resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006). President Sleiman, throughout his tenure, repeatedly underlined the importance of agreeing on a national defence strategy that would help address the issue. While the recent National Dialogue sessions made positive reference to the policy of disassociation and the need to take forward the National Defence Strategy proposal, it is disappointing that some parties boycotted the latest sessions. I strongly encourage a return to full participation in the Dialogue and to its addressing the issue of arms and other issues to build upon the Baabda Declaration. I again call for the implementation of earlier decisions of the Dialogue, including for the disarmament of non-Lebanese groups and the dismantling of the military bases of the PFLP-GC and Fatah al-Intifada.

67. The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic continues to have an adverse impact on Lebanon. I deplore the cross-border violations of Lebanese territory from the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the movement of armed fighters and materiel between the countries. The lack of progress in delineating and demarcating the Lebanon-Syrian Arab Republic border is no justification for violations of Lebanese sovereignty by any party. I am encouraged by the steps the Government of Lebanon has taken to improve security along the border, including the deployment of troops and equipment to key areas in eastern and northern Lebanon and robust efforts to interdict those trying to undermine stability in the country. I call upon the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and all parties fighting there to cease violations of the border and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006).

68. I condemn the continued participation of Lebanese citizens in the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic in breach of the policy of disassociation adopted by the Government of Lebanon and of the principles of the Baabda Declaration of June 2012, which were agreed by all political leaders of Lebanon. I call again on all Lebanese parties to step back from the Syrian conflict, consistent with their commitment in the Baabda Declaration, and I urge them instead to act in the interests of Lebanon in line with the policy of disassociation.

69. The reduction in violence and terrorist attacks in the reporting period is a positive development. The Government deserves credit for its security plans, and the security forces should be commended for their inter-agency coordination and their achievements. But the threat of instability remains, and it is important that the unity be sustained. In Tripoli in particular, which has suffered recurring rounds of violence since 2008, it is vital that there be follow-up in terms of reconciliation, repairs to property and economic and social assistance in order to consolidate the respite afforded by the security plan so far.

70. These successes notwithstanding, the reporting period witnessed further acts of violence against civilians and attacks against the Lebanese Armed Forces. These reflect the continued unacceptable proliferation of weapons outside the authority of the State. I call on Member States to uphold their obligation under resolution 1701 (2006) to prevent the sale or supply of arms or related materiel to entities or individuals in Lebanon. Continued broad political support is also needed for the security and judicial authorities to combat impunity in respect of acts of violence. The increased efforts by the authorities to bring to justice those responsible for violence are welcome, and an indicator of their commitment to combat impunity. The continuation of the trial in the Special Tribunal for Lebanon sends a similar message.

71. The achievement of the leaders of Lebanon in forming an inclusive government and the success in turn of the Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Salam, in undertaking important steps in the field of security and breaking longstanding impasses, for example, with regard to government appointments, has been positive. My Special Coordinator joined with others, including on behalf of the International Support Group for Lebanon, in encouraging the leaders of Lebanon to sustain and build on that constructive engagement ahead of the end of President Sleiman's term on 25 May. The achievements of President Sleiman during six critical years in office were substantial, and I pay tribute again to

his cooperation with the United Nations, in particular in respect of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

72. It is deeply regrettable that the Lebanese Parliament failed to elect a successor to President Sleiman within the constitutional timeframe. A prolonged vacancy in the highest office of the Lebanese State does not strengthen confidence and stability in Lebanon. I myself, the International Support Group for Lebanon and the Security Council, in its presidential statement of 29 May 2014 (PRST/2014/10), have urged the leaders of Lebanon to work to ensure that the election takes place as soon as possible and without external interference. It is vital, meanwhile, that ministers continue to work together effectively and that all in Lebanon support Prime Minister Salam to ensure that necessary decisions can be taken and that the State remains able to address the many challenges facing it. I also stress the need for timely preparations to ensure that parliamentary elections take place in accordance with Lebanon's tradition of freedom and democratic practice. The United Nations remains ready to help with technical support for the parliamentary election process. Lebanon needs a functioning presidency, Government and parliament. The international community needs an effective partner in Lebanon.

73. The Security Council and the international community have repeatedly commended Lebanon for its open-border policy for refugees fleeing the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the efforts of the Lebanese authorities to meet the needs of these refugees. Without prejudice to the right of Lebanon to manage its border, it remains essential that civilians fleeing the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic who are indeed in need of safety and protection are granted access and not returned in circumstances where their lives would be at risk. As the Government continues to review its policy with regard to refugees, the United Nations will continue to work closely with Government interlocutors with a view to ensuring that refugee-related issues are addressed effectively and in line with international humanitarian law.

74. Hosting the largest number of refugees per capita in the world, Lebanon exhibits remarkable generosity under challenging circumstances. Additional funds are needed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, including women and girl refugees at risk, and to mitigate the severe stresses on host communities and public services. I encourage the international community to fully consider the risks if Lebanon is not supported sufficiently to meet these immense challenges, and I remind Member States of their collective burden-sharing responsibilities. Much work has been done to facilitate such support, including the development of the stabilization road map. I welcome the activation of the multi-donor trust fund with the help of the World Bank, and strongly encourage donors to contribute to it, or through the other mechanisms available, to ensure that Lebanon is adequately supported.

75. I again commend the Lebanese Armed Forces for its continued commitment and strong cooperation with UNIFIL in its area of operations and for its robust and effective role in addressing security challenges elsewhere in the country. I welcome the intensive effort to strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces in response to the five-year capabilities development plan and the strategic dialogue. It is encouraging that work in this area is moving forward. I thank the Government of Italy for hosting the ministerial conference in support of the Lebanese Armed Forces on 17 June. I welcome the outcome of the conference, including the progress signalled in the

French-Lebanese agreement generously financed by Saudi Arabia. I encourage Member States to contribute further to the strengthening of the Lebanese Armed Forces, drawing on the capabilities development plan and through the strategic dialogue.

76. I thank the Member States participating in the International Support Group for Lebanon for their continued commitment, as evidenced by their participation in the 5 March meeting hosted by President Hollande in Paris, as well as that in Rome. The sustained unity and energy of the Group has helped to generate momentum on key assistance and support for Lebanon. I look forward to working closely with it in the coming period.

77. The security situation in the Palestinian refugee camp of Ein el-Helweh is of concern. I welcome the efforts of camp leaders to work with the Lebanese authorities to maintain order. The need to improve the living conditions of Palestine refugees in Lebanon, without prejudice to the resolution of the refugee question in the context of a comprehensive peace settlement, is ever more urgent. I encourage donors to be forthcoming in support of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), including to enable it to assist Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic. Recent restrictions by the Lebanese authorities on the entry of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic are a serious protection concern. I reiterate the call of UNRWA for easing access at the border, including for family reunification, transit and on humanitarian grounds.

78. Regrettably, progress has still not been made with regard to the Shab'a Farms area in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 1701 (2006). I call, once again, on the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel to submit their responses to the provisional definition of the Shab'a Farms area that I provided in October 2007 (S/2007/641).

79. For both Lebanon and Israel the development of their oil and gas reserves is a national priority. I encourage both countries to continue efforts to address the delimitation of their respective maritime exclusive zones and the exploration and exploitation of their natural resources in a manner that facilitates this and does not give rise to tensions. The United Nations continues to follow this issue closely, given its importance for security, and remains ready to assist in this matter, should both parties so request.

80. In the face of a fourth year of conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon's continued resilience is striking. As pressures continue to mount, the country remains under serious threat if efforts do not continue to address current challenges. The calm prevailing across the Blue Line makes a vital contribution to the stability of Lebanon, and to the security and well-being of the peoples of both countries. Longer-term security and stability call for an end to conflict in the region, including progress towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

81. I wish to express my appreciation to all countries contributing troops and equipment to UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. I pay a particular commendation to the outgoing UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander Paolo Serra, who has provided excellent service and leadership for the past two-and-a-half years. I also commend the military and civilian personnel of UNIFIL, as well as the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Derek Plumbly, and the staff of his Office, all of whom continue to play a critical role in helping to promote stability along the Blue Line and in Lebanon.